

I CLAIM:

1. A nonwoven fabric comprising:
 - (A) a self-sustaining pre-bonded web formed by carding together
 - 5 i 75-89% by weight, based on the total fiber, first monocomponent fibers having a first denier of 5-6,
 - ii 10-20% second monocomponent fibers having a second denier of 10-12, said second denier being substantially higher than said first denier, and
 - 10 iii 1-5% bicomponent fibers having a denier generally similar to said first denier, said bicomponent fibers having a first component with low softening point and a second component with a relatively higher softening point, said first component binding together said first, second and bicomponent fibers to form said self-sustaining pre-bonded web; and
 - 15 (B) 6-10% by weight cured latex particles, based on the total fiber of said self-sustaining pre-bonded web, disposed within the interior of said fabric and smeared on the outer surfaces of said fabric, said particles being cured in situ to provide enhanced tensile strength to said fabric.
- 20 2. The fabric of Claim 1 wherein said first and second monocomponent fibers are independently polyester, polyethylene or polypropylene.
3. The fabric of Claim 2 wherein said first and second monocomponent fibers are polyester.
- 25 4. The fabric of Claim 1 wherein said first component of said bicomponent fibers bonds together said first fibers, said second fibers and said second component of said bicomponent fibers.
5. The fabric of Claim 1 wherein said fabric has a tensile strength of at least 800 grams/inch in MD and at least 60 grams/inch in CD.

6. The fabric of Claim 1 wherein said fabric has a moisture level of less than 10%.

7. The fabric of Claim 1 wherein said second monocomponent fibers are substantially thicker than said first monocomponent fibers.

5 8. A nonwoven fabric comprising:

(A) a self-sustaining pre-bonded web formed by carding together

i 75-89% by weight, based on the total fiber, first fibers having a first denier of 3 to 7 and a first softening temperature,

10 ii 10-20% second fibers having a second denier of 8 to 20 and a second softening temperature, said second denier being substantially higher than said first denier, and

iii 1-5% third fibers having a denier generally similar to said first denier and a softening temperature less than the first and
15 second softening temperatures, said third fibers binding together said first, second and third fibers to form said self-sustaining pre-bonded web; and

(B) 6-10% by weight cured latex particles, based on the total fiber of said self-sustaining pre-bonded web, disposed within said fabric and smeared on the outer surfaces of said fabric, said particles being cured in
20 situ to provide enhanced tensile strength to said fabric.